United Nations A/60/304

General Assembly

Distr.: General
26 August 2005

Original: English

Sixtieth session
Item 60 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Training and research

United Nations Institute for Training and Research

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report has been prepared in compliance with General Assembly resolution 59/252 of 22 December 2004. The report highlights the main features of the ongoing training and capacity-building programmes of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). It puts special emphasis on recent methodologies developed by the Institute such as e-learning and web-based interactive platforms, knowledge management and new approaches to public-private partnerships.

It proposes ways in which UNITAR could provide more systematically specialized common services to the United Nations funds and programmes and to the organizations of the system. While the voluntary contributions remain at a low level, the financial situation of UNITAR has improved, owing to the increase of special-purpose grants.

The report concludes by providing seven concrete recommendations.

* A/60/150.

05-47396 (E) 051005

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Introduction	1–7	3
II.	Overview of current programmes	8–63	4
	A. Multilateral diplomacy and international affairs management	8–11	4
	B. Peacemaking and preventive diplomacy	12–16	5
	C. Correspondence instruction in peacekeeping operations	17	6
	D. Women and children in and after conflict	18–19	6
	E. Environmental law programme	20–23	7
	F. Climate Change Programme	24–26	8
	G. Programmes in chemicals, waste and environmental democracy	27–30	9
	H. Decentralized cooperation programme	31–40	10
	I. Legal aspects of debt and financial management	41–43	13
	J. UNOSAT programme	44–51	13
	K. UNITAR New York Office	52–54	16
	L. UNITAR Hiroshima Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific	55–60	17
	M. Dushanbe Field Office in Tajikistan	61–63	18
III.	Recommendations	64–70	19

I. Introduction

1. The present report has been prepared in compliance with General Assembly resolution 59/252 of 22 December 2004, in which the Assembly, inter alia, reaffirmed the relevance of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and welcomed the progress made in building partnerships between the Institute and other organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, and also noted with appreciation the activities of the newly established Hiroshima Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. The Assembly encouraged the Board of Trustees of the Institute to continue its efforts to resolve the critical situation of the Institute and renewed its appeal to all Governments, in particular those of developed countries, to give the Institute their generous financial and other support.

2. Meanwhile, the Institute's activities continue to grow. The different training clusters — international affairs management, environment and sustainable development, debt and financial management, international trade and the information society — have not changed. The latest training and capacity-building programme of the Institute, on decentralized cooperation, is receiving growing appreciation and achieving increasing success.

3. In close collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and thanks to funding from the Global Environment Fund, UNITAR is now serving more than 100 Member States in building capacity for sound management of chemicals and waste. As regards climate change, relying on three centres of excellence based in developing countries, UNITAR has developed, with the Executive Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[1] important programmes on vulnerability, adaptation and mitigation. Finally, cooperative links are being developed with different regional associations of cities and local governments, in consultation with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat). Besides capacity-building, training activities are growing steadily. Close to 10,000 participants benefit from UNITAR workshops and seminars each year, while close to 17,000 persons follow the Institute's distance learning and e-learning programmes. The design and diffusion of new pedagogic methodologies have allowed these positive developments.

4. UNITAR is totally self-funding and does not receive any contributions from United Nations core funds, nor does it charge any fees to the beneficiaries of its programmes. The level of the voluntary contributions to the General Fund, however, remains very low, putting at risk some of the most traditional training programmes of UNITAR, addressed to diplomats accredited to various United Nations offices. General Assembly resolution 59/252 stressed the need for continued consideration of the issues related to the Institute's rental and maintenance costs, which will be debated by the Fifth Committee during the sixtieth session of the Assembly.

5. In resolution 59/252, the General Assembly also encouraged the Institute to diversify the venues of its activities by including cities hosting regional commissions, so as to promote greater participation and reduce costs. This call may reflect a misunderstanding in respect of the Institute's modus operandi. Indeed, since its restructuration in the early 1990s, UNITAR has always brought the trainers

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

to the participants, rather than the reverse. Any new event planned in the cities hosting United Nations Headquarters would have to be separately funded. This is not possible currently, because of the low level of voluntary contributions to the General Fund.

6. Finally, in the same resolution, the General Assembly decided to consider the issue of the periodicity of the agenda item entitled "Training and research" at its sixtieth session. At its forty-third session, held in Geneva on 26 and 27 April 2005, the UNITAR Board of Trustees agreed that the reporting could indeed be done on a biennial basis and recommended that the periodicity be changed to every two years.

7. The present report presents the main activities designed and conducted by UNITAR since the submission of the complete report of activities by the Executive Director of the Institute to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session.[2]

II. Overview of current programmes

A. Multilateral diplomacy and international affairs management

8. The UNITAR multilateral diplomacy and international affairs management programme continues to offer an extensive menu of training opportunities aimed at enhancing the professional performance of diplomats and other government officials, with a view to ensuring efficient and effective participation in international affairs. The programme comprises the following three pillars:

- Training for the diplomatic communities in Geneva and Vienna.
- Tailor-made training conducted in the field or in Geneva.
- Fellowship programmes.

9. In the context of the first pillar, the programme has offered, since June 2004, 18 training activities for the benefit of Geneva-based diplomats and 3 training activities to the diplomatic community in Vienna, the latter conducted in cooperation with the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Austria. Despite special fund-raising efforts, funding to finance training activities in Nairobi could not be secured.

10. Over recent years, the interest of Member States in tailor-made training activities has been greater than ever. In the period under review, the programme delivered 16 activities of this kind. Among the 10 training activities that were conducted in the field, the majority took place in Africa (Nigeria, the Gambia, Namibia, South Africa and Morocco); others took place in South America and Eastern Europe (the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Serbia and Montenegro). Five tailor-made activities were implemented in Geneva, in particular several skill development activities for the benefit of the Syni Programme of the City of Lausanne, a Swiss non-governmental organization based in and funded by the City of Lausanne that strives to set up partnerships with international organizations engaged in international cooperation. Furthermore, training was conducted in several areas of public international law for lawyers from the United Nations Compensation Commission. The programme has also been offering familiarization

[2] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 14* (A/59/14).

courses on the United Nations system in Geneva for groups of delegations of Member States; and a tailor-made orientation training has been organized in Geneva for diplomats from Saudi Arabia.

11. The fellowship programmes are conducted on an annual basis and participation is competition-based. As in previous years, funds have been made available to finance three fellowship activities, namely, the six-week United Nations/UNITAR Fellowship Programme in International Law, offered in cooperation with the Office of Legal Affairs of the Secretariat, New York; the seven-month Fellowship Programme on the International Civil Service, conducted in cooperation with l'Agence intergouvernementale de la francophonie, l'École nationale d'administration, l'Institut des relations internationales du Cameroun and le Centre international d'études pédagogiques (CIEP) de sèvres; and the Fellowship Programme in International Affairs Management: Building Partnerships for Human Security and Development, implemented in cooperation with the Government of Japan.

B. Peacemaking and preventive diplomacy

12. *Programme for briefing and debriefing special and personal representatives of the Secretary-General.* The third seminar for current special representatives and senior Headquarters staff was held in Switzerland in October 2004 and attended by nearly all of the current special representatives of the Secretary-General. The first edition of the publication entitled *On Being a Special Representative of the Secretary-General* is being distributed to all new special representatives of the Secretary-General by the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the Secretariat as part of their briefing programmes. A second edition is being finalized based on further interviews with special representatives and will be distributed to all representatives upon its completion. The project, including this publication, and the DVDs of the interviews and seminars held with special representatives of the Secretary-General, has also contributed to a web-based operational support tool for mediators prepared by the Department of Political Affairs to be launched later in 2005. A DVD entitled "Lessons in Peacemaking" has been produced as well and is being shown as part of the training material for the Institute's other training programmes.

13. *UNITAR-International Peace Academy fellowship programme in peacemaking and preventive diplomacy.* The programme (an annual one), which provides advanced training in conflict analysis, negotiation and mediation for United Nations staff and diplomats, was conducted in June and July 2005 in Norway with support from the Governments of Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The goal of the programme is to enhance the work of the United Nations in preventing and resolving conflict. Now in its twelfth year, the programme, which is taught by senior scholars and practitioners of conflict resolution, has gained a reputation for excellence.

14. *Regional training programmes to enhance conflict prevention and peacebuilding in Africa.* Modelled on the fellowship programme mentioned directly above, this two-week annual programme has been conducted over the past six years in Addis Ababa for governmental officials from ministries of foreign affairs and defence as well as representatives of civil society from the entire African continent.

A similar programme is conducted each year in Capetown for the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region. Both programmes focus on African issues and use primarily African resource persons. The Capetown programme was conducted in March 2005; the Addis Ababa programme in November/December 2005. The purpose of these programmes is to enhance the skills of government and non-government officials in conflict analysis, negotiation and mediation. The next programmes are planned for 2007.

15. *Training programmes to enhance the conflict prevention and peacebuilding capacities of indigenous peoples' representatives.* This programme's objective is to strengthen the capacity of representatives of indigenous groups so that they can negotiate their priorities while building constructive relationships with their negotiating partners. The one-week training programme, in its sixth year, was conducted in Switzerland in July 2005 following the session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. A separate one-week regional training programme is held each year in a different part of the world. The 2005 regional training programme is planned for French-speaking indigenous representatives of Africa at the end of 2005.

16. These programmes are intended to build capacity for the prevention and resolution of conflict. Resource persons include senior scholars and practitioners of conflict resolution, special representatives of the Secretary-General and special rapporteurs as well as senior staff from the United Nations and regional organizations. UNITAR staff work closely with the United Nations Secretariat, other United Nations bodies, ministries of foreign affairs and defence and civil society organizations to ensure that those chosen to participate can use the skills effectively in their future work.

C. Correspondence instruction in peacekeeping operations

17. The UNITAR Programme of Correspondence Instruction in Peacekeeping Operations (UNITAR POCI) was established to provide standard distance training on peacekeeping that would be universally available at low cost to a large population of students of diverse geographical distribution. Since 1995, in cooperation with the Training and Evaluation Service of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, this training has been provided through self-paced correspondence courses, originally in the form of printed course booklets but now also on CD or as online downloads. Each of the 17 courses offered covers a different aspect of peacekeeping. All courses are available in English and some are also available in French, German, Russian, Spanish and Swahili. During the period from 1 July 2003 to 30 December 2004, the Programme registered approximately 5,000 enrolments through the main office and approximately 20,000 more through mission training focal points, with students coming from 125 nations. The Programme is funded exclusively through enrolment revenues.

D. Women and children in and after conflict

18. The UNITAR Training Programme for Civilian Personnel in Peacekeeping Operations on the Special Needs of Women and Children in Conflict, designed as

the Institute's specific and targeted contribution in support of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), has continued delivering awareness-raising workshops on gender and child rights to international and local staff members of United Nations peacekeeping operations. Between June 2004 and June 2005, two more United Nations field missions, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), received training. The UNITAR seminars and, through the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the ever-increasing presence of gender advisers and child protection advisers in peacekeeping operations are two phenomena working hand in hand in stressing the importance of these two dimensions of United Nations peacekeeping. An emerging trend, which UNITAR is supporting through cooperation offers, is the diminishing separation among civilian, military and civilian police training activities in peacekeeping operations, evident in the increasing number of integrated mission training centres.

19. As a result of the recent scandals related to acts of sexual abuse and exploitation committed by United Nations peacekeeping personnel, the Institute's seminar curricula were quickly adjusted by earmarking a considerable amount of time for separate training sessions on sexual exploitation and abuse — a topic that, so far, had always been covered in a less visible manner within other training modules. Both in academic research and on an operational level, most stakeholders customarily work on topics related either to gender or to children, often in an effort to preserve what is seen as conceptual clarity. The Institute's programmatic decision in 2001 to link both topics has now given UNITAR the comparative advantage of being one of the few organizations that addresses the concerns of women and children, the very two groups suffering from sexual exploitation and abuse, under a common and integrated training approach.

E. Environmental law programme

20. The activities carried out by the UNITAR environmental law programme have focused on a distance-learning course on international environmental law and on the development of capacity-building workshops organized at both the national and the regional level. The distance-learning course is a two-year self-tailored programme that leads to a UNITAR diploma in international environmental law. In the period under review, over 85 new candidates from 35 different countries enrolled in the course.

21. Capacity-building workshops dealt primarily with issues related to freshwater management, integrated coastal zone management and implementation of environmental laws at the national level. Two workshops were specifically designed for members of the judiciary and dealt with industrial hazards and civil and criminal responsibilities, for Brazilian and European judges, respectively. Over 200 participants attended these training activities organized at the national or regional level in Georgia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lebanon, Brazil, Jordan (for Iraqi officials), Italy and Croatia.

22. The environmental law programme has recently introduced knowledge management tools into its training activities designed to study national competencies in implementing environmental obligations. Based on the UNEP criteria for analysing compliance and enforcement of multilateral environmental

agreements, the programme developed a self-assessment matrix with which to explore knowledge possessed by the workshop participants, facilitate dialogue to identify strengths and shortcomings, and propose concrete actions to address identified weaknesses. The UNITAR environmental law programme has successfully used this new training methodology in the workshops conducted in Georgia, Jordan and Croatia.

23. The programme enhanced cooperation with various organizations and institutions through the signature of memorandums of understandings. Notably, memorandums of understandings were signed with the Secretariat of the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents, with the Veracruz State Council for Environmental Protection, with the Central American Commission for Environment and Development and with the UNEP Regional Office for Europe together with the University of Geneva.

F. Climate Change Programme

24. Guided by decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the UNITAR Climate Change Programme assists in enhancing or creating regional pools of expertise in the developing world, as well as in strengthening their infrastructure for delivering capacity-building activities and developing their human resources. Over the last 12 months, the Programme has concentrated its efforts on achieving these objectives with the implementation of two key projects, while strengthening working relationships with United Nations entities such as UNEP, UNDP and the Sustainable Development Programme of the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

25. *Climate change capacity development (C3D).* This project seeks to strengthen the national human resource and institutional capacity of developing countries (non-Annex I Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) for effective negotiation, policy analysis and coordination. To this end, it provides financial resources and technical advice to centres within these countries. The immediate target groups include three regional centres in Africa and Asia that are direct partners in the project, namely, Environnement Et Développement du Tiers Monde (ENDA) in Dakar; University of Cape Town Energy Research Centre; and Munasinghe Institute for Development in Colombo. The intention is for the partners to then reach out and target the Framework Convention national focal points, senior-level climate negotiators, focal points for bilateral and multilateral development assistance, and other concerned government actors and stakeholder groups in the targeted regions. Project members continued implementation of C3D activities in 2004 with:

- Two project management committee meetings held in February and June.
- Development and peer review of training modules on greenhouse gas inventories and mitigation, sustainable development and climate change, and vulnerability and adaptation to climate change, to be prepared by the partner institutes by August 2005.
- Development and launch of the project's online collaborative platform in collaboration with the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN).

- A training of trainers on vulnerability and adaptation to climate change in Capetown in October
- Working meetings with donors and two new partner institutes to plan expansion of activities into two new regions (the Caribbean and the Pacific) for a second project phase (2006-2008).

26. *Project to provide technical assistance to least developed countries in the preparation of their national adaptation programmes of action*. The Climate Change Programme built upon its past two projects of assistance in the preparation of national adaptation programmes of action with the launching of a training publication consisting of examples and exercises designed to offer expert guidance for the preparation of high-quality national action plans. The publication, prepared in cooperation with UNDP, UNEP and the Least Developed Countries Expert Group under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, summarized many of the training activities covered at the four 2003 National Adaptation Programme of Action workshops organized by UNITAR. Print and web versions were launched in both French and English at the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Buenos Aires in December 2004. In an effort to provide ongoing support to least developed countries involved in the national adaptation programme of action process, the Climate Change Programme, with funds from the French Ministry of the Environment, used its past experience in providing online services to develop a new project for online technical support to country teams. This project, developed in 2004 for implementation in 2005, will link national adaptation programme of action teams with regional experts, implementing agency representatives and the Least Developed Countries Expert Group under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change via an online platform so that countries may receive targeted and timely assistance throughout the development of their programmes of action. The online support system is now fully operational and the Climate Change Programme is in the process of registering the country teams and relevant representatives for access.

G. Programmes in chemicals, waste and environmental democracy

27. In the course of 2004-2005, the Institute's programmes in chemicals and waste and the recently launched programme on environmental democracy supported capacity-building efforts in some 70 developing and transition countries to protect human health and the environment, through a variety of projects supported by a number of donor Governments and organizations. UNITAR methodologies continue to be developed and used for these activities, and are regularly reviewed and refined based on lessons learned and experiences gained in different countries.

28. Key methodologies and training approaches are being actively proposed by countries themselves for endorsement by and application to the ongoing Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) process, convened by UNEP with the active participation of nine additional international organizations and strongly supported by UNITAR. The overarching goal of the Strategic Approach is to have ensured, by 2020, that chemicals are used and produced in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the

environment — a target endorsed by the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

29. Based on country demand and experiences gained in pilot countries over a number of project cycles, UNITAR assisted countries in developing and sustaining an integrated national programme for the sound management of chemicals, based on a management coordination platform, self-assessment of capacity and infrastructure, identification of priorities, skill-building, development of a financial resource mobilization strategy, and facilitation of information exchange. This programme, or elements thereof, can be applied to any developing country or transition country so as to strengthen its approach to the sound management of chemicals. The development of a national programme document outlining national activities towards achieving the 2020 goal was also included. The programme to date has been supported by a wide variety of donors including, in 2004-2005 in particular, the Government of Switzerland and the European Commission.[3] Future endeavours will seek to strengthen the participation of civil society and the private sector in these efforts.

30. UNITAR also continued to see significant progress with a number of specialized programmes designed to assist countries with implementation of key international agreements. These included: 11 country projects on implementation of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals,[4] and a variety of regional and other Harmonized System support activities; 3 country projects, part of the environmental democracy programme, to develop national profiles for the implementation of the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (the "Aarhus Convention") (document ECE/CEP/43); a major Global Environment Facility project within the framework of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, implemented by UNDP and co-executed by UNITAR and the Ghana Environmental Protection Agency, to eliminate polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in Ghana. In addition, UNITAR is also assisting some 50 countries with activities to strengthen planning measures related to the Stockholm Convention.

H. Decentralized cooperation programme

31. In the framework of a type II World Summit on Sustainable Development partnership, the decentralized cooperation programme aims at reinforcing the capacities of local authorities (parliamentarians and mayors) and their local partners (civil society and the private sector) through training in three majors areas:

- Sustainable urban development (access to basic services such as water and sanitation, waste management, transport and energy, urban planification).
- The information society (e-governance, e-administration, e-democracy).
- Human and social development (public health, HIV/AIDS, cultural diversity, urban safety).

[3] Please see paragraph 23 of the 11 August 2004 report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (A/59/230) for related work programmes.

[4] First revised edition: United Nations publication Sales No. E.05.II.E.13.

32. The main objective of these training activities is to achieve sustainable urbanization in the context of increasing responsibilities of local authorities. One of the objectives is to encourage South-South and South-North cooperation between local authorities in order to improve access to basic services. These capacity-building activities are implemented through a global network of 11 associated centres of the Centre international de Formation des Acteurs Locaux (CIFAL).

33. Pursuant to the results achieved during the World Summit of Cities and Local Authorities on the Information Society, held in Lyon, France on 4 and 5 December 2003, UNITAR has been associated with CIFAL Bilbao and the Network of Local Authorities for the Information Society (IT4ALL) in organizing the second World Summit of Cities and Local Authorities on the Information Society, to be held in Bilbao, Spain, from 9 to 11 November 2005, prior to the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society to be held in Tunisia in November 2005. This reflects the realization by the world's regions and local authorities of the importance of mobilizing in order to define their basic roles in the new information society. The preparatory process towards the Bilbao Summit has been co-organized by UNITAR and CIFAL Bilbao. It has consisted of several technical workshops, hosted by the Plock (Poland), Durban (South Africa) and Shanghai (China) CIFAL centres, and several regional conferences in Shanghai, Leipzig (Germany) and Dakar. UNITAR, as co-organizer of the Summit, is assisting CIFAL Bilbao in preparing the different activities of the Summit.

34. The Environmental Information Circulation and Monitoring System on the Internet (SISEI) programme is a capacity-building programme for African countries on the use of information technologies for environmental information management. It is a contribution to the undertaking of answering the information needs of the environmental component of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) (A/57/304, annex). Driven by the recommendations and obligations of multilateral environmental agreements, its main objective is to establish information communities that will access information useful for elaborating policies for poverty reduction, taking inspiration from the United Nations Millennium Declaration (see General Assembly resolution 55/2) and thus contributing to the fulfilment Goal 7 of the Millennium Development Goals.

35. For the last two years, training activities have been conducted in collaboration with the Telecommunication Development Bureau of the International Telecommunication Union, enabling 10 African countries (the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, the Niger, Uganda and Zambia) to generate institutional arrangements, elaborate their legal framework and integrate technical solutions adapted to local contexts and conditions. During the same period, inter-agency agreements have been established focusing on complementarities and further integration, for the benefit of recipient countries. Another round of activities with 10 additional countries is under consideration for 2006-2008.

36. The e-local governance Mali initiative implemented during the period January-June 2004 sought to achieve capacity-building of local authorities in the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) for local development. It responded to a need expressed by institutions in Mali regarding ownership of ICT potentialities by local government. It resulted in the establishment of a working group composed of representatives of the national government, local government,

the civil society and development partners dealing with challenges and opportunities of the information society at the local level. This working group is involved in the preparation of Mali for participation at both the World Summit of Cities and Local Authorities on the Information Society (Bilbao, Spain) and the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (Tunis).

37. In this framework, resolution 20/5 entitled "Access to basic services for all within the context of sustainable development" was adopted by the Governing Council of UN-Habitat its twentieth session in Nairobi in April 2005.[5] It was followed up by decisions adopted by the Commission on Sustainable Development at its thirteenth session (New York, April 2005) on a number of items relating to access to basic services and their affordability.

38. Oil exploration and extraction usually generate important royalties for central Governments. On the local level, however, the economic benefit is not often significant and local communities may see oil activities more as "problems" than as an opportunity for economic development. This leads to lack of trust between the companies and the communities. Such a situation makes it difficult for oil and gas companies to take action, even if they become increasingly aware that they need to present an image that clearly shows their willingness to correct past mistakes and to pioneer initiatives towards sustainable development, peacebuilding and environmental conservation. This in turn would contribute to consolidating their operations. Local development projects in oil production areas should apply a participative approach involving major stakeholders — civil society, State and local authorities, youth movements and local private companies — to identifying needs and defining implementation strategies. This approach would ensure full and efficient appropriation by the local people, thereby maximizing benefits for all.

39. UNITAR proposes to work with oil companies in three identified priority areas, namely, ecological rehabilitation, conflict resolution and project management. In this regard, the Institute decentralized cooperation programme provides a platform allowing major groups of stakeholders (national Governments, local authorities, civil society, oil companies, intergovernmental organizations, researchers and interested groups) to exchange views and experiences on how to foster sustainable development in oil reproduction areas. Training activities conducted in the field and through the network of CIFAL centres focus on the promotion and establishment of public-private partnerships between local communities, economic actors, national and local governments and oil/gas companies.

40. The UNITAR/decentralized cooperation programme has designed and developed a methodological approach to preparing the ground work, through training and capacity-building, for further implementation of concrete local development projects that benefit the local populations. For the time being, projects have been initiated in three areas (Port Gentil, Gabon; the Niger Delta, Nigeria; and the Mahakam Delta, Indonesia) in collaboration with other United Nations organizations, local authorities and civil society groups, taking into account the specificities of the targeted geographical areas.

[5] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixtieth Session, Supplement No. 8* (A/60/8), annex I, sect. B.

I. Legal aspects of debt and financial management

41. The UNITAR training and capacity-building programme in the legal aspects of debt and financial management continues to offer a broad menu of training and capacity-building services intended for government officials, debt managers and central bankers from sub-Saharan Africa, the Central Asian republics and Azerbaijan, as well as from selected countries in other regions. The programme offers regional training for debt managers; in-country workshops through which to build necessary skills; and training on the development of national profiles to ameliorate the legal infrastructure that governs public finance and borrowing. The Institute conducts all of its regional and in-country training under this programme with regional organizations and partners.

42. The programme also offers a calendar of e-learning courses (or online training) on a yearly basis with a view to allowing a broad range of debt managers and finance sector officials to benefit from the in-depth Internet-based skills-building and networking. The topics of the online courses currently being offered include: negotiation of financial transactions; capital market development and regulation (basic and advanced); effective public debt management; mechanics of loan agreements; debt rescheduling with the Paris Club; and, finally, arbitration and alternative dispute resolution. In the year 2004, UNITAR trained over 950 debt and finance managers using the e-learning training approach. Six new e-learning courses are planned for 2005. As of 31 July 2005, two six-week e-learning courses had been completed, training a total of 404 participants from over 70 countries. The third of these six courses is currently running, with over 250 participants enrolled.

43. In addition to training (on-site and online), UNITAR provides a website for the benefit of developing country debt managers. This website (www.unitar.org/dfm) contains the latest information and documentation.

J. UNOSAT programme

44. UNOSAT is the Institute's programme on operational satellite applications and the sole United Nations activity entirely dedicated to elaborating satellite imagery and developing this technology for the use of the United Nations and developing countries worldwide. UNOSAT works with several United Nations organizations and large non-governmental organizations to improve humanitarian response to crises and natural disasters, as well as post-crisis sustainable recovery and vulnerability reduction. These are all areas central to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and also to the ongoing United Nations reform process. Most geographical information needs can be met using satellite imagery, but non-specialists face difficulties in obtaining the right information. The UNOSAT core function is to make it easy for United Nations organizations working in emergencies and for local authorities and fieldworkers to identify their needs and obtain the right information in a timely manner. Since 2002, UNOSAT has delivered services 24 hours a day, seven days a week, through the Internet and directly in the field, in the areas of early warning, crisis response, sustainable recovery and vulnerability reduction. UNOSAT support includes methodological guidance, satellite imagery selection and procurement, image-processing, editing of maps and geographical information systems (GIS) services, training and research.

45. In recognition of its unique positioning and role, UNOSAT has become part of several global initiatives of strategic importance. Within the United Nations, UNOSAT is part of the International Recovery Platform (IRP) and the Global Disaster Alert System (GDAS). The Platform is an innovative programme led by a few United Nations organizations and supported by Japan and other donors. The Global Disaster Alert System, which is the result of the collaboration between the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat and the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office, will redefine the area of early information dissemination for disaster management. In January 2005, UNOSAT represented UNITAR at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction which took note of its work in the final outcome document (the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2010: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters).[6] UNOSAT is a recognized partner of the European Commission and the European Space Agency on global undertakings such as the Global Monitoring for Security and Stability (GMOSS) programme and the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) programmes. The latter has created a multinational consortium for emergency mapping of which UNOSAT is the pivot. For its experience and its first-hand knowledge of users, UNOSAT has been called to participate in the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS). This initiative looks at the same areas as the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security from a strategic and coordination standpoint and is recognized by the United Nations and the European Union (EU). UNOSAT holds the formal status of Participating Organization with the Global Earth Observation System of Systems and participates in the Earth Observation Ministerial Summits (three have been convened thus far).

46. The most visible part of UNOSAT work is the support of emergency relief and peacekeeping operations with geographical information and knowledge management based on satellite applications. In 2004 and 2005, UNOSAT has taken the lead in this area in over 13 countries, in which it helped humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organizations to deliver aid more rapidly and more efficiently, starting with countries affected by the unprecedented disaster caused by the Indian Ocean tsunami. Other countries included the Islamic Republic of Iran (Bam earthquake), Morocco (Al Hoceima earthquake), Namibia, Grenada, Haiti and Guyana (floods), and the Philippines, Pakistan and Nepal (storms and flash floods). Apart from natural disasters, UNOSAT has worked in other emergency and conflict areas: Guatemala, Colombia, Liberia, Iraq, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka (peacebuilding); Senegal, Mauritania and Benin (climate change and environmental assessment); the Sudan and Chad (internally displaced persons assistance and refugee protection); and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (technological accidents). Finally, a large series of maps have been provided to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for drug control purposes.

47. Besides providing its emergency services, UNOSAT is augmenting its output in the areas of training and research. Training in the use of satellite imagery is particularly in demand at the local level where authorities and communities need geographical information to determine land-use strategies, orient their development and manage their vulnerability to natural hazards. UNOSAT has accumulated experience in training United Nations staff and also local authorities. This experience will be used in cooperation with UNITAR and also the International

[6] See A/CONF.206/6 and Corr.1, chap. I, resolution 2.

Training Centre of the International Labour Organization (ILO). In the area of research, also a vital function of UNITAR, the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) and UNOSAT are working on Grid technology (high-intensity parallel computing for the treatment of large data) and also on new methods for feature recognition in satellite imagery, underground water identification and other future applications.

48. In the past three years, UNOSAT has achieved a significant track record in respect of services provided to a number of key organizations of the United Nations system involved in post-conflict and natural disaster recovery. This experience has been gained in close consultation and coordination with the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, in the framework of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group, the United Nations Education Technical Working Group and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee. This track record includes:

- Damage mapping packages based on satellite imagery obtained through the International Charter "Space and Major Disasters", which have been made available at the request of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to the humanitarian community, in more than 13 disasters occurring since November 2003 including outstanding cases such as: the Bam earthquake, Islamic Republic of Iran, 2003; the Al Hoceima earthquake, Morocco, 2004; Haiti, 2004; the Philippines, typhoon and floods, 2005; and the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami, 2004.

- Post-conflict environment assessments for the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in Afghanistan, 2003; Iraq, 2004; and Liberia, 2004.

- Long-term disaster risk reduction for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction in Nicaragua; Algeria; the Democratic People's Republic of Korea; Djibouti; Sri Lanka; and Indonesia.

- Regional and local development planning and monitoring for UNDP.

- Conflict assessment and post-conflict recovery support mapping for UNDP (Sri Lanka, Nepal and Guatemala, 2003); for the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) (Iraq, 2004); and for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the Secretariat (Liberia, 2005).

- Satellite imagery programming and supply for illicit crop monitoring by the drug programme of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in all priority countries, including Afghanistan, Myanmar and Colombia (since 2003).

- Humanitarian coordination and disaster mapping for the World Food Programme (WFP) (the Sudan and China, 2005).

- Clear water supply and camp management support for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Myanmar and Chad.

- Biodiversity management and climate change assessment for UNEP and UNITAR in Senegal, Mauritania and Benin (2004) and Sao Tome and Principe (2005).

49. In view of its capacity and experience, UNOSAT should become a permanent programme within the Institute, providing specialized common services applied from satellite and new information technologies for early warning, crisis response, sustainable recovery, vulnerability reduction and capacity-building at the local level. The UNOSAT programme should be governed by an open consortium around a core of key United Nations users including the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNDP, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UNHCR. Key partners should also include the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, the Security Council and ILO.

50. These multiple experiences have been successfully combined in capacity-building projects at the local level. UNOSAT has tested these methodologies in Nicaragua with the collaboration of the community of Matagalpa. Discussions are under way to replicate this success in other countries and regions, especially in cooperation with UNDP, the World Health Organization (WHO), UNESCO and others. This type of capacity-building integrating local knowledge and technology is particularly valid in the implementation process of the Millennium Development Goals and relates specifically to poverty eradication and vulnerability reduction. UNOSAT is working at developing satellite-based communications including Internet access to further facilitate community-level access to technology.

51. The UNOSAT programme's strength lies in the fact that it combines the capacity to manage complex projects with deep understanding of user requirements and the expertise to define, set up and ensure the delivery of products and services, infrastructure and know-how. Today, UNOSAT represents UNITAR in the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee for humanitarian action, the Secretariat of the Group on Earth Observations (GEO), the Committee on the Peaceful Use of Outer Space and several other bodies. Based on progress made to date, the strategic plan 2005-2007 focuses on service consolidation and strengthening the programme's leadership role within the United Nations system. For more details visit http://www.unosat.org.

K. UNITAR New York Office

52. The main function of the New York Office of UNITAR is to offer training for delegates of Member States accredited to United Nations Headquarters. This year, the Office undertook an evaluation of its activities with a view to: (a) being more responsive to the needs of delegates; and (b) more systematically integrating committees of the General Assembly, commissions of the Economic and Social Council and organizations, funds and programmes into its planning and designing of workshops. With this new perspective, 33 courses — conducted in English, French or Spanish — offered training to 1,837 delegates. New courses such as the summer institute on United Nations reform and the workshop on remittances and development met the most pressing needs and requests of the permanent missions, and were of contemporary relevance to the United Nations agenda.

53. The New York Office's capacity-building activities centre around three broad categories: (a) thematic issues relating to social and economic development, as well as peace and security, such as population and security, environmental governance, maritime law, intellectual property rights and international trade; (b) *functioning of*

the United Nations system, including orientation for new delegates on the work of the General Assembly and of the Main Committees, and a briefing on the Security Council for new members of the Council; and (c) skill-based training ranging from information technology to public speaking, negotiation and the drafting of resolutions.

54. Given the New York Office's mandate as a Regional Office for the Americas, it has sought to respond to the many requests for training made for Latin America and the Caribbean. However, financial and personnel constraints have limited the possibility to fully implement this mandate. Nevertheless, the New York Office responded to requests from the Executive Office of the Secretary-General to support the Global Conference on the Role of Civil Society in the Prevention of Armed Conflict and Peace-Building by hosting a briefing on this issue in the context of Latin America prior to the Conference.

L. UNITAR Hiroshima Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

55. The UNITAR Hiroshima Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific was established in 2003. In 2004-2005, its second year of operations, the Office pursued a two-pronged policy of institutional and programmatic consolidation and expansion. The regional week-long workshops, held mostly in Hiroshima, have continued to provide the opportunity to assist in and support the work of numerous officials, academics and practitioners from the Asia-Pacific region and to develop and test numerous training methodologies, which are then shared with the participants for replication and implementation at the national level (two such events were organized: in Kyrgyzstan on international economics and finance, and in India, on World Heritage management). United Nations peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities and post-conflict reconstruction, particularly resonant in the context of Hiroshima, were given the highest priority through the holding of a high-level conference on peacekeeping and through the continuation and expansion of the Afghan Fellowship, which has met with much interest, both in Afghanistan and internationally.

56. The Hiroshima Office has also been organizing high-level round tables with notable scholars, politicians and commentators. The round tables have raised the interest of the local community, allowing it to have a better understanding and fostering its support of the Institute's work and presence in Hiroshima.

57. In the two years since the establishment of the Institute's Hiroshima Regional Office, roughly 500 international experts and training participants have come to Hiroshima. Additionally, some 550 Japanese participants and observers also attended the training programmes and monthly round tables. As to its research work, the Regional Office has undertaken this in three ways: through international conferences on capacity-building in post-conflict countries; through ongoing research on capacity-building conducted by international and bilateral organizations; and through close cooperation with specialists in capacity-building.

58. The training methodologies systematically applied by UNITAR to all its training activities are:

- Training of trainers.
- Distance learning and new training technologies.
- Application of knowledge management techniques.
- Project development support and monitoring.

59. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 59/252, UNITAR will make available to other United Nations organizations involved in capacity-building all its publications and books related to the topic.

60. Representing UNITAR in the Asia-Pacific region and seeking synergies with other projects of UNITAR, the Hiroshima Regional Office also strengthens partnerships among United Nations and other entities. The Institute receives its main financial contribution from the Hiroshima Prefectural Government. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and the City of Hiroshima also provide financial assistance to selected programmes. Numerous institutions around the world provide in-kind support. Though the list is not exhaustive, those institutions include the United Nations University (UNU), UNESCO and its World Heritage Centre, the World Bank and its Global Distance Learning Network, Hiroshima University, the University of Texas at Austin, Seton Hall University and the City University of Hong Kong as well as private institutions such as the Getty Conservation Institute (Los Angeles, California) and the Institute for Ocean Policy (Tokyo), all of which regularly send experts to regional office activities. In line with its "training of trainers" philosophy, UNITAR former participants-trainees intervene now as resource persons, co-organizers and coaches of the Institute's training activities, thus expanding the UNITAR Hiroshima network.

M. Dushanbe Field Office in Tajikistan

61. In cooperation with the Ministry of Economy and Trade of Tajikistan, UNITAR opened in October 2004 a Field Office in Dushanbe whose main objective was to help Tajikistan in its process of accession to the World Trade Organization. The General Assembly welcomed the establishment of the Field Office, which is funded by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs.

62. On 1 April 2005, the Institute's Field Office entered into its second phase of activities, which consists of a series of training programmes that will be offered so as to benefit Tajikistan's ministries, governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations and the academic community. For that purpose, a training needs assessment mission was conducted by UNITAR in Dushanbe during June 2005, identifying the short-term training needs of the ministries and the civil society with a view to implementing five training workshops from September 2005 to September 2006 in the capital. The topics that would be covered include: law of international watercourses, negotiation skills and techniques, international environmental law and policies, multilateral conference diplomacy and multilateral negotiation, and Tajikistan and migration challenges and opportunities.

63. The training needs assessment also helped to identify the strategic training needs of the various ministries and universities with a view to providing them with training activities and eventually technical assistance.

III. Recommendations

64. **UNITAR should continue to consolidate and expand its training and capacity-building programmes, in particular through cooperation with specialized institutions within and outside the United Nations system.**

65. **The trend towards mobilizing, as a priority, endogenous capacity by relying on existing training institutions in developing countries should be strengthened further. This will guarantee sustainability in the medium term.**

66. **UNITAR should continue to develop innovative training methodologies, such as e-learning and web-based interactive platforms, knowledge management and self-needs assessment, as well as new approaches in public and private partnerships for training. These methodologies must be revisited and renewed through regular evaluation. The United Nations would thus appear among those organizations at the forefront of efficient training and capacity-building endeavours.**

67. **Member States, funds and programmes of the United Nations and specialized agencies should make the best possible use of the Institute's programmes. The active participation of UNITAR in the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC), a consortium of seven organizations, suggests that the Institute's UNOSAT programme should be more systematically established to provide specialized common services applied from satellite and new information technologies for early warning, crisis response, sustainable recovery, vulnerability reduction and capacity-building at the local level. The UNOSAT programme should be governed by an open consortium around a core of key United Nations users.**

68. **The issue of rental and maintenance costs of the premises used by UNITAR in New York and Geneva remains pending. The General Assembly at its sixtieth session should consider its expeditious resolution.**

69. **The financial viability of UNITAR remains an issue. While the situation of the programmes financed by special-purpose grants is satisfactory, the non-earmarked contributions to the General Fund remain seriously inadequate. Member States should consider resuming or increasing their contributions.**

70. **The periodicity of the agenda item entitled "Training and research" could, considering the present situation of UNITAR, become biennial as of the sixty-second session of the General Assembly, in 2007.**